

Adrian 6. Die Novemberis, 1705.

Ordered,

That the Thanks of this House
be given to *W. Williams*, Dean
of Lincoln, for the Sermon by him
Preached before the

SERMON

PREACH'D Before the
HOUSE of COMMONS,

On Monday November the 5th 1705.

Martis 6° Die Novembris, 1705.

Ordered,

That the Thanks of this House
be given to *Dr. Willis*, Dean
of *Lincoln*, for the Sermon by him
Preached before this House Yesterday,
at *St. Margaret's Westminster*; and
that he be Desired to Print the same;
And that the Lord Marquis of *Hartington*,
the Lord *William Powlet*, Sir
Richard Onslow, and Mr. *Monson* do
Acquaint him therewith.

Paul Jodrell,
Cl' Dom' Com'.



694.9.25
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A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D before the Honourable
HOUSE of COMMONS,

A T
St. Margaret's Westminster,

O N
Monday, the 5th of November, 1705.

BEING THE
ANNIVERSARY THANKSGIVING
For the Happy Deliverance from the
Gunpowder-Treason PLOT.

And also for the
Happy Arrival of His Late *MAJESTY*
on this DAY for the Deliverance of
our CHURCH and NATION.

By *Richard Willis*, D. D. Dean of *Lincoln*,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty. *By J. L. for Mat. Wotton*

L O N D O N:

Printed by *J. L.* for *Mat. Wotton*, at the *Three Daggers*
in *Fleet-street*. MDCCV.

ST. MARGARET'S

HOUSE OF COMMONS

St. Margaret's Westminster



ANNIVERSARY, THANKSGIVING
For the Happy Deliverance from the
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By Richard Willis, D.D. Dean of London
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LONDON
Printed by J. I. for W. Baskett, at the Swan and Lamb
in Fleet-Street. MDCCLXXII.

GEN. xlix. 7.

*Cursed be their Anger, for it was fierce,
and their Wrath, for it was cruel.*

WE are now met together to return our Praise and Thanks to God for *Two* of the greatest Deliverances which He ever wrought for this Church and Nation.

It is this Day a *Hundred Years* since the First of these, our Deliverance from the *Powder-Treason*; which I mention, that we may look upon it as the more solemn Return of the Day after the Revolution of an *Age*; And that we may Praise God the more heartily from this Consideration, That we have so long Enjoyed the Blessing of it, and that we have still the Liberty to meet here to Worship God in Purity, and to acknowledge His Mercies to us, notwithstanding all the *Plots* of the same Party against us ever since.

The other Deliverance we are to Commemorate, is that by our Late Glorious King *William*. The Plot against us in this
later

later Case did indeed not look so Tragical as in the former, but the Destruction of our Religion, and our Liberty, had very probably been more effectually brought about, had not God been pleased to raise us up a Deliverer. 'Tis to this that we owe the Enjoyment of our present *Glorious QUEEN*, of our *Parliaments*, and of our *Church*, and that we have the Power left us at least of Fighting for the *Liberties of Europe*; In a Word, this was a Deliverance as much desired and longed for *before* it came, as perhaps any ever was, however it may have been acknowledged *since*.

But it is not my Design to enlarge upon these Things so well known to most that hear me, but I shall proceed to the Words of my *Text*, and from thence take Occasion to speak to some Matters proper to the Reasons of our Meeting together this Day.

*Cursed be their Anger, for it was fierce,
and their Wrath, for it was cruel.*

These Words were spoken by *Jacob*, upon Occasion of the Barbarous Murder of the *Sichemites* by his Two Sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, of which you have a large Account

count in the 34th Chapter of this Book ; and they easily put us in Mind of the *Black Attempt* of this Day ; an Attempt, as in it self much more *barbarous* ; so also much more *inexcusable*, because the Authors of it professed at least the Christian Religion, and did it under a Pretence of Zeal for it. The *Light of Nature* would easily teach Men that the Authors of such Hellish Designs ought to be abominated by all Mankind, but much more the *Christian Religion*, which is not so eminent in any Thing, as in that great Degree of Love, and Gentleness, and Meekness it requires from all its Members. It not only forbids Murder, and much more the Murdering in a manner a *whole Kingdom* together, but it forbids all *Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking*, and commands that we should be *kind, and tender-hearted, forgiving one-another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us* ; If any differ from us, it requires that we should endeavour to *restore them in a Spirit of Meekness*, that we should with *Meekness instruct those that oppose themselves*. In a Word, our Saviour hath left this as the distinguishing Character of Christians,

Eph. iv.
31, 32.

2 Tim. ii.
25.

John xiii.
35.

Christians, that they Love one another; *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one for another.*

But it will perhaps be asked, if this be the True Christian Temper, how it comes to pass that we see so much of a *contrary Spirit* in most of the Disputes that are, or have been among Christians? No Disputes being managed with more Heat than those about *Religion* generally have been.

Now in Answer to this, it must be said, that no question a great deal of this has proceeded from the same *Fountain* that other Sins do; from *Pride* and *Anger*, and other *Corrupt Affections*; But yet if we search Things to the Bottom, we shall find some other *Accidental Causes* which may have had a great Influence in promoting this Humour in the World.

I. It is to be considered that many of those who have a good Sense of God and Religion, yet never were, and I am afraid are never like to be so *wise* as they should be, Good Men may be mistaken, and will therefore sometimes put a great Value upon what does not deserve it; and sometimes there are Occasions which do truly require

require our Zeal and Concern; when a Man is thus *warm'd* by Religion, his Passions may insensibly come into the Matter; The Vices of the Mind are not at any Time so easily discerned as the *grosser* Sins which belong to the Body; But when once they are mixed with a *Zeal* for Religion, it is then much more difficult to find them out, and He must be a *Wise* as well as a *Good* Man, who can keep all such Mixture out of his Soul when he has to do with that *warm* Work.

2. It is to be Considered, That if Contentious and Unreasonable Men will *begin* a Quarrel, tho' it be about smaller Matters, those who most desire to be at Quiet, cannot always enjoy what they desire, but may be engaged without their own Fault in such a Contest. And this is a Case very often happens in the World, that Men are *drawn* into Contentions by the Perverseness of other People, in Things which they would otherwise lay very little Stress upon; for it may not be fit to suffer themselves, and the Society to which they belong, to be run down by *Noise* and *Clamour*, tho' the Matters in themselves are not of very great Moment; and in this

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Case, tho' a great Stir be made, yet a few Persons only may be justly Chargeable with the Fault of it.

3. I doubt it often happens that Men foment Heats and Animosities, and keep up Parties, that they may serve their own Turns by being at the *Head* of them; And Good Men do not always know enough of the World to be aware of this, or to suspect the Designs of those who profess great Zeal and Friendship for them, and by this Means they are often betrayed into unreasonable Fears, and Jealousies, and Suspensions of one another, which will almost of Course raise Heats, and unjust Censures, and sometimes make Men proceed to Acts of Violence. This has been so common a Practice, and so obvious generally to all indifferent Standers by, that one would wonder it should so generally succeed as it has done. And I cannot but believe that our own Divisions at *Home* could not have been kept up so long, and so apparently against the Interest of our *Church* and *Nation*, or have been carried on with so much Heat without some such evil Practices.

4. It must be Confessed that upon these, and other Accounts that might be mentioned,

tioned, all Parties of Christians have gone too much from the True Spirit of the Gospel in the Management of their Differences with one another. But I do not know any Party of Men who make it a *Principle of Religion, and a necessary Duty* to Murder or undoe Men for the sake of Christ but those of the Church of *Rome*; The Truth of it is, as that Religion, so far as it differs from ours, consists wholly of *Human Inventions*, brought in to serve the *Pride, and Interest, and Ambition* of those that are the *Governours* of it, so it has been promoted and carried on in the World, with more *Barbarity, and Cruelty, and Oppression*, I won't say than any Religion ever was, but than any other Design whatever. We have many Arguments both from *Scripture* and *Antiquity*, and the *Common Sense* of Mankind to prove the Falshood of that Religion; but there is nothing that does so immediately shock a Man that reads the Scriptures, and sees there, what Love, what Mildness, what Gentleness, what Beneficence, is required toward one another, and to all the World; I say nothing does so immediately shock a Man who reads these Things every where in Scripture, as to con-

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sider the great *Uncharitableness* and *Cruelty* of that Church both to the *Souls* and *Bodies* of all that differ from them; To their *Souls*, by pronouncing all to be damned who die out of their Communion, how innocent and pious soever they were in their Lives; and to their *Bodies* by either burning, or effectually undoing them whenever they have it in their Power.

The Apostle tells us that the *Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits*, and therefore certainly that Church cannot be guided by this *Heavenly Wisdom*, which judges so uncharitably of the Salvation of so many Christians, and commands all Princes under Pain of Excommunication to exterminate and root them out.

But before I proceed any further in this Matter, I think it will be fit to take Notice of an Objection that is frequently made, and that is, that we have no Reason to complain of their Cruelty to us since we have made so many *severe Laws* against them, and that therefore *We* are guilty of *Persecution* as well as *They*.

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Now in Answer to this it must be confessed that we have made many severe Laws against them, and I shall take notice presently upon what occasions, and for what reasons we did it; but they themselves must confess that notwithstanding these Laws they still are able to *live* among us, as their Predecessors have done ever since the Reformation, and that with so little Oppression, that I cannot hear of any Number of Families that have transplanted themselves into other Countries, tho' they might have Sold their Estates, and have carried what they had along with them. Many of them enjoy very great Estates, and have hitherto done so from Father to Son, and have been Protected in them by the same Laws that other Subjects were: And therefore whatever clamour the Severity of our Laws may make in other Countries, those who Live here see very little of the effects of it. How glad would Protestants in *France*, or *Spain*, or *Italy*, to say nothing of other Countries, be to enjoy the Liberty and Quiet they enjoy among us? They have been liable to no *Massacres*, nor the Severities of an *Inquisition*, nor the Barbarity of *Dragooning*; and

and those of their Religion Abroad have not seen them come by Thousands, Naked and Destitute to Beg their bread among them, and glad they could get out of their Native Country upon any Terms. These things *We* have seen from time to time, and considering the many Provocations we have had of all sorts, it is a great sign of the merciful temper both of our Country and Religion that we have not retaliated. I would only observe one thing more upon this Head, and that is that notwithstanding the open violation of our Laws in a Late Reign, and the fears the Nation was put into from those of that Religion, yet in all the popular Tumults that happened upon that account, not one of them that I can hear of lost their Lives, or have done ever since, but for *Plots* against the Government *legally proved*.

But in the next place, it will be fit to consider what reasons we may suppose the Nation went upon in making those Laws that are against them, and in not allowing them the same Toleration it has allowed to many others who Dissent from the *Established Church*.

1. The First that I shall mention is the Nature of their *Publick Worship*, which we believe to be *Idolatrous*, and consequently very dishonourable to God, and *Jesus Christ*, and therefore not fit to be *publickly* suffered by any that do believe it to be so. We see that God in the Old Testament frequently reproves the Kings of *Israel* not only for suffering the *grosser* Idolatry of the *Heathen*, but also for not taking away that *lesser* of the *Calves* of *Dan* and *Bethel*, which was in many respects less than that with which we charge the Church of *Rome*. And indeed the case is very different between conniving at the *private opinions* of Men when there is nothing in their way of Worship injurious to the Divine Majesty, and suffering the Honour and Worship due only to God to be *publickly* given to Creatures. And in this respect we have much more reason to Prohibit the exercise of *their* Religion than they can so much as pretend to Prohibit *ours* if they had Power to do it: For whatever they may think of our *private opinions*, they cannot pretend that there is any thing wicked or injurious to God's Honour in our *Worship*; and therefore

fore at the beginning of the Reformation in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign the Papists themselves generally came to it, and continued to do so till the Pope fearing that this might insensibly bring them over to us, forbade it.

As for our Charge of *Idolatry* against that Church, I have not time now to insist at large upon it, and therefore I shall say nothing of their Worshipping of *Images*, of *Relicks*, of the *Cross*, of *Saints* and *Angels*, and above all of the *Blessed Virgin*; But would only take notice of what is their *daily service*, the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, in which if they cannot prove the absurdest thing in all the World, *Transubstantiation*, they cannot deny but a little *Wafers* has every Day *Divine Honour* paid to it, and is Worshipped instead of *Jesus Christ*.

I know that they say for themselves, that the Honour is intended to *Christ*, and if they are mistaken in the Object, they hope that *He* will excuse it: But in Answer to this I would only put a parallel Instance; Supposing there should be Persons in the World, as some say there are, that do believe there is but *one God*, that
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made the World, and all things in it, and do believe withall the *Sun* to be this *one* God, and do accordingly *Worship* it as such; I would ask whether this be not *Idolatry*? And yet their *intention* is as much to *Worship* that *one* God that made the World, as it is the *intention* of the Papist to *Worship* *Jesus Christ* in the Mass; and the mistake of the object in *this* Case one would think should be at least as excusable as in the *other*; for it is much more agreeable to common Sense that so Glorious a Being as the *Sun* should be God, than that a *Wafer* or a *bit of Bread* should be so.

2. It is to be considered in the next place, that those of the Church of *Rome* own a Person for the *Head* of their Church who is a *Foreigner*, and allow him very great *Prerogatives*, and therefore at best can be but *half* Subjects, at least to a *Protestant* Prince: But this is not the worst of it; This Head of their Church is a declared *Enemy* to all Protestants; and at the same time pretends to a Power to *Excommunicate* them, to *dissolve* their Governments, to *deprive* their Princes, and to *absolve* their Subjects from their Allegiance, and to *give* away their Country to such of

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his own Communion as will endeavour to get it. They cannot deny but that these are the Pretensions of the *Head* of their Church, and have been so for above 500 Years at least, and that He Challenges this Power not from any humane Constitutions, but immediately from *Jesus Christ*, whose *Vicar* He pretends to be; And to fix these things the faster upon their Consciences, a great part of that Communion pretend that He is *Infallible*. It cannot certainly be denied but these Principles must be very dangerous to *Protestant* Princes and States, and that they have reason to keep under all those whom they suspect to be *guided* by them. But further yet, these Principles have frequently been put in *practice*. Their own Historians give us an Account of great Numbers of Princes that have been Deposed by the Pope, and it's very well known what was Attempted against our Famous Queen *Elizabeth*, which caused so many *Rebellions* and *Plots* against Her through the whole Course of Her Reign, and the *Invasion* of the Kingdom by a Foreign Prince, which very probably had taken effect, had not God appeared signally in Her Defence, and dissipated his mighty Fleet

Fleet by *Storms* and *Tempests* more than we could do by any Power we could bring against it. I do not say that *all* the *Papists* in *England* joyned then with the Pope against the *Queen*, but it's certain that *many* of them did, and as for those that did not, it does not appear that it was out of a Principle of *Loyalty* to the *Queen*, or *Love* to their Country, but only out of *Fear* of the *Queen's* Power; this we have Reason to judge by another *Bull* sent over from the Pope at their *Desire*, wherein * He excuses them from endeavouring to *depose* the *Queen*, till they should have a fair *Opportunity* to do it; And it is not unlikely but there may be such *Bulls* as these in Favour of our present *QUEEN*, who is every Year Excommunicated at *Rome* in the famous *Bulla Cænæ*, that Catholicks shall not be bound in Conscience to attempt any thing against Her till a *French Power* shall make the Success *probable*; but if in the mean time any of them shall have a Mind to venture their *own* Lives by endeavouring to take away *Her's*, that it shall not only be *lawful*, but highly *meritorious* to do it, and they shall be reckoned *Martyrs* if they suffer for it, as the *Plotters* of this

* Camb.
Eliz. P.
316. Ed.
Lugd. Bat.
1639.

Cambd.
Eliz. An.
1570.

Day generally are. It was upon Account of these Principles and Practices that the severest Laws we have against them were made in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, whereas before that Attempt against Her by the Pope, they generally Lived with as much Peace and Quiet as other Subjects did, only without the *publick* Exercise of their Religion.

Vid. Less.
Discussio
Descreti
Mag Con.
Lateran.
P. 89.

* Ezov. de
Pontif.
Rom.
P. 611,
612, &c.

To Conclude this Head, The *Deposing Doctrine* is by Great Writers of their own Church said to be *determined* by no less than *Seven* General Councils, which perhaps is more than can be said for any one Article of the *Trent Creed*, and to have been put in *Execution* upon above * *Thirty* Kings and Princes, and therefore must be a Doctrine of their Church, or they will have much ado to Salve the Honour either of *Popes* or *Councils*.

It therefore highly concerns all of that Church in this Kingdom to consider well of this Matter; if they do still own this Doctrine, they have no Reason to expect but that we ought to look upon them as *publick Enemies*, that are bound to do us all the Mischief they can as soon as it is in their Power; That which may be only a Specu-

Speculative Error in other Countries, is a most dangerous *practical* one in this; But if they will disown it, as some pretend to do, they ought in Reason to renounce Communion with the *Pope*, as being a *Tyrant* and an *Usurper*, that pretends to a Power from *Jesus Christ* which *He* never gave him, that would lead his Followers into *Rebellion*, and *Murder*, and *Perjury*, and into all the *Sins* and *Miseries* which these Principles have frequently caused, and may probably cause again; And till they will do this, we have no Reason to trust them who are under the Government, and whose Consciences are under the Influence of such a Person. There is this further Reason why they should renounce his Communion if they dis-believe this Doctrine, that the Falshood of his Pretence in this Point, is a certain Argument against his *Infallibility*; to which also He has long pretended; and consequently that he is not only an *Usurper*, but an *Heretick*, and an *Impostor*; for there cannot well be a greater *Heresy* than the pretending to be the *Infallible Guide* of the whole Christian Church, if *Jesus Christ* has not appointed him to be so; And this is what they would certainly cry out.

out against as the *blackest Heresy* in any body else that should pretend to it; and therefore if they do believe this to be a false Pretence in the *Pope*, they ought to look upon it to be as much Heresy in him, as they would believe it to be so in any other Person.

3. The Last Reason I shall insist upon, is, what I have already taken Notice of, the *Cruelty* and *Barbarity* of the Church of *Rome* towards all *Protestants*, and that upon such steady settled Principles of Persecution interwoven with their *Religion*, that we have Reason to Expect the same Treatment from them that our Predecessors have met with, if ever we shall be so unhappy as to fall under their Power.

Concil. Lat.
sub Inno-
centio Ter-
tio. Can. 3.
de Hæres.

The Great Council of *Lateran*, as they commonly call it, has determined that all *Princes* ought to take an Oath to *Exterminate* all *Hereticks* out of their *Dominions*, that is, either *banish*, or *kill* them; but the *latter* has been the more common Way; And that if any Prince refuse to do this, then the *Metropolitan* and *Bishops* of the *Province* must *Excommunicate* Him: And, if after all, He remain contumacious, and have so much *Tenderness* for his Subjects

jects that he will not exterminate them, then the *Bishops must signify it to the Pope, that he may depose him, absolve his Subjects from their Allegiance, and give away his Kingdom to Catholicks*; that is, to those that will destroy the Hereticks, for it supposes none to be Catholicks that will not do this. This is the determination of *that* Council, and the Consequence of that, is, that all Princes of that Communion who do believe their Religion must think themselves bound in Conscience to act accordingly when it is in their Power; And if they have any *tenderness* of Nature which makes them shrink at such Barbarous work, they must look upon that to be *weakness* and *want of Faith*; And if they have given their Subjects any *Promises* or *Oaths* to the contrary, all these must be *null* and *void*, or however, if they want any *Dispensation*, the Pope will be always ready to give it them, and grant them withal not only Forgiveness of all their Sins, but higher degrees of Glory in Heaven for such *meritorious works*.

These things are not mere *Speculations*, but have been confirmed to us by the almost constant practice of several Hundred Years;

Years; I may say constant, except when apparently it could not be done without great inconveniencies another way; so that what by *Crusado's*, by *Massacres*, by *Inquisitions*, and other Methods of that kind, more Christian Blood has been shed by that Church in this part of *Europe* only, than was by the *Heathen* all the World over in all the *Ten Persecutions*, I say much more, as far as we can judge by the remaining Accounts we have of that matter.

It is well known what we suffered in *England* during the short Reign of Queen *Mary*, but that was nothing in comparison of what other *Nations* Suffered; We are told by an Historian that liv'd and died in their Communion, that in the *Low Countries* only, a place of less extent than *England*, in the compass of a very few Years, a little before their Civil Wars broke out, what by *Hanging*, *Beheading*, *Drowning*, *Burning*, and *Burying Alive*, no less than *Fifty Thousand* lost their Lives for Religion. As for *France*, if we take in the Persecutions of the old *Albigenses*, what was done at the beginning of the Reformation, and what has been done in our own time, the Number of those that have been *Burnt* or *Mas-*

Fath. Paul
Hist. of the
Council of
Trent. Lib.
5. p. 387.

Massacred, or otherwise put to Death, or forced to fly their Country, will amount to many *Hundred Thousands*.

○ But I would not proceed in this matter any further, lest I should seem to incite to the same *Barbarities* toward *them*; which, God knows, is not my Intention, as it is not agreeable to the Mildness of that Holy and Merciful Religion which we profess; And all that I would Infer from what has been said is only this, That since that Church is so irreconcilable to all others, and must and will Persecute whenever it is in their power, that we have a right in our own defence to do what shall be necessary to keep them under, that they may not be able to do us mischief; but that in this we ought not to judge by *Anger* or *Resentment*, but by the true nature and necessities of things.

Give me Leave to make some Application and so I shall Conclude.

1. From what has been said we may see what Reason we have to Bless and Praise God for his constant Protection of us against all the *Plots* and *Designs* of *That* Church, and especially for the Two great *Deliverances* which we *this Day* Commemorate.

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morate. Let the Consideration of this great Mercy of GOD to us, make us put a *Value* upon our *Religion*, and endeavour to *live* up to it, and to do all we can to engage GOD still to stand by us, that neither we nor our Posterity may ever fall into the Hands of those Merciless and Cruel Men. Our Enemies are not yet past Hope, they have a mighty Power *abroad* to support and encourage them, and we are *divided* at home who should oppose and resist them, and, which adds to the Melancholy Prospect, we are too many of us, by our Sins and Abominations provoking GOD to leave us; It is much to be feared, that notwithstanding all His Mercies to us, yet there is as much *open Vice*, as much *Forgetfulness* of God, as much *Irreligion* and *Infidelity* as ever; I wish I could say there were not more.

This is therefore what I would earnestly recommend to all that hear me, That we would all seriously consider what we can do to cure that Spirit of Irreligion and Infidelity, which has not only *spread* it self largely, but is grown *impudent*, and seems to *despise* Heaven; I believe I need not say how much danger we must be in of God's leaving

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ing us, if we leave *Him*; not that I would charge this upon the *Body* of the Nation, God forbid, I hope there are but very few, compared to the *whole*, that run into these Impieties; but I am afraid the Nation will be chargeable with not laying the matter to heart as they ought to do, with not being so tenderly concerned as they should be at the growing of an evil so *dishonourable* to God, and so *dangerous* to the Souls of Men; And if this be the Case, have we not just reason to *fear* least God should deprive us of the Blessing of the Gospel which we value so little?

Religion and *Liberty* are the Two greatest Blessings that God can bestow upon any People; and especially so when they go together: Let us have a care that we do not set one of these against the other, for that is the readiest way to be deprived of *both*: Give me leave therefore to Propose One or Two Things further to your Consideration about this matter.

I. The First is this, That Irreligion and want of Principles is more especially dangerous to a *Free* People, where many must be concerned in Publick Councils; There will be always so much danger of *corrup-*

tion, *Private Interest*, or *Faction* in such a People, that unless God and *Conscience* come in to keep them in Order, they will have much ado to hold long together; And therefore, whoever set up for being Patrons of *Liberty*, should at the same time set up for Patrons of *Religion*, for otherwise the more Liberty we have, the more Danger we shall be in of being undone.

2. The Second Consideration I would propose is this, That tho' the *Corrupt* and *Libertine* Way of Talking so common among us may be taken up by some to go as far from *Popery*, and other Things which they are pleased to call *Superstition*, as they can; Yet in Truth there is great Danger that such a Humour, if it should grow any thing general, would at last lead back to *Popery* again, as all *Extremes* are naturally apt to produce one another. As in the State, the immoderate Abuse of *Liberty* commonly ends in *Arbitrary Power*, so it is in *Religion*, for *Popery* is *Arbitrary Power* there. And as the true Way to preserve any *Legal Constitution*, is to keep it within its due Bounds, to avoid any exorbitant Use of Liberty; so the likeliest Way,

Way to keep Men still in Love with that *Liberty* which God and Nature have given us of judging for our selves in *Religion*, is to use it with *Sobriety*; and I am satisfied that there is nothing that has so much hindered the Progress of the Reformation, or been a greater Prejudice against it in the Minds of Considering Persons than Excesses in this kind. But besides this, a State of *Scepticism* and Want of Principles, however it may please for a little while, yet must be after some Time very uneasy to the Minds of Men; there will be secret *Doubtings* and *Mis-givings* in their Consciences, especially when *Death* approaches, or *Afflictions* come upon them, then none are commonly so *superstitious* as they; When they have tired themselves with all the *Mazes* of *Scepticism*, then nothing is so welcome as an *Infallible Church*, whose Opinions may be swallowed down in the *Lump* without considering; especially if we add what other Advantages *that Church* has to deceive *dying* Sinners after a wicked Life. To Conclude this Head, *Irreligion* and *Superstition* are naturally apt to produce one another; the *Superstition* of one Age commonly begets *Irreligion* in the next,

next, so when that hath taken its Course, and quite wearied Men with the sad Effects of it, it commonly ends in *Superstition* again.

The Last Advice I would give is in the Words of the Apostle, spoken indeed in another sense, but yet very proper for our present Circumstances, *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith God hath made you free, and be not intangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Popery is a Yoke that neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear; We had like not long since to have had it fixed upon us, by a Prince of that Religion, but God was pleased wonderfully to deliver us, and I hope we shall all be so wise as to *stand by* this his Blessing to us, and endeavour to *transmit* it safe to our *Posterity*.

We have had but Two Princes who openly Profess'd the Popish Religion since our first Reformation, in the Time of *Edward the Sixth*; They Both Promised us fair at their *first coming* to the Crown, but how they *performed* their Promises is very well known; And if ever we should be so unhappy as to fall under the Power of *another*, we may depend upon it, the case will be so again.

again. Those Two Princes I mentioned were Persons whose Words might have been depended upon in any Case except that of *Religion*; but no *Popish* Prince can with a good Conscience perform a Promise to *protect* a *Protestant* Church, but till he has an opportunity to *oppress* it, which by the Laws of Popery he is bound to do as soon as it is in his Power; and therefore all *Promises* or *Oaths* to the contrary must be esteemed by him to be *null* and *void*. But, Blessed be God, we are now so secured by *good Laws* that we cannot easily miscarry again in this Point without our own fault: Let us therefore depend upon God's Assistance, and go on *courageously*; Let no Enemy *fright* us from our constancy, nor any *pretences* or *fair promises* ever *delude* us into danger again.

F I N I S.

BOOKS Written by the Reverend
Dr. Willis, Dean of Lincoln.

AN Address to those of the *Roman Communion* in *England*, occasioned by the late Act of Parliament for the further preventing the *Growth of Popery*.

Reflections upon a Pamphlet, Intituled, *An Account of the Growth of Deism* in *England*; Together with some Considerations about the Christian Religion.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the Lords Justices of *England*, upon *Sunday, July* the 12th. 1701. Published by their Excellencies special Command.

Reflections upon Mr. *Toland's* Book, called *Christianity not Mystrious*; with some Considerations about the Use of Reason in Matters of Religion, in a Letter to a Friend.

A Sermon Preached before the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, at their First Yearly Meeting, on *Friday, February* the 20th. 1702. at *St. Mary le-Bow*.

A Sermon Preached before the Lord-Mayor on *Easter-Tuesday*, 1702. A Spittal Sermon.

Concio ad Sanctam Synodum, ab Archiepiscopo, Episcopis & Clero, Provinciae Cantuariensis celebratam, Habita in Ecclesia Cathedrali S. Pauli, Londini 20 Die Octobris, A. D. 1702.

A Sermon Preached at *St. Mary le-Bow*, to the Societies for *Reformation of Manners*, Jan. 3. 1704.

A Sermon Preached at *St. Andrew Holbourn*, to the Gentlemen concern'd in promoting the Charity-Schools in *London* and *Westminster*, *June* the 8th. 1704. Being *Thursday* in *Whitsen Week*.

A Thanksgiving Sermon Preached before the *Queen* at *St. Paul's*, on *Thursday, August* the 23d. 1705.

